

GBSO

City of
Birmingham
Symphony
Orchestra

Best of Bond
Symphony Hall
Friday 20 February 2026,
7.30pm

Concert programme £2.50

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BEST OF BOND



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Alison Jiear
Vocalist

INTRODUCTION

A warm welcome to Symphony Hall as we celebrate the music of an iconic franchise. For me, a James Bond theme instantly transports you to a world of glamour and danger.

The first hint of that iconic trumpet sound and the drama begins, and every musical phrase feels as thrilling as a plot twist from the film it accompanies.

As a singer, this repertoire is the one I look forward to performing more than any other – and I do have my favourites.

Two themes in particular: Skyfall and Nobody Does It Better. Skyfall has an incredible sense of scale. It starts simply, just voice and piano, then simmers like a fuse being lit until the full orchestra kicks in and the climax hits. I love it.

Originally written for The Spy Who Loved Me, Nobody Does It Better is one of the rare Bond themes that feels more like a love song. It doesn't lean heavily into menace or espionage – it's warm, elegant, and completely sincere. And I always get to sing it for someone special... but I won't give that one away!

I don't get to sing Live and Let Die, but when I hear Matt Ford perform it, I'm instantly transported back to watching the film at the cinema in 1973.

I was absolutely petrified of Jaws. I was a young girl, but I can still remember the sheer thrill of it... along with that lingering childhood fear.

With every new release, I'm fascinated by how the Bond sound evolves while still carrying that unmistakable musical DNA.

Tonight's programme celebrates the songs that have defined 007 across the decades. I'm especially delighted to be sharing the stage with Matt Ford and Stephen Bell. May our combined love of this music take you on a journey through Bond's world — bold, dramatic, and utterly unforgettable.

Norman, James Bond Theme, 5mins
Barry, You Only Live Twice, 3mins
Hewson and Evans, Golden Eye, 4mins
Paul McCartney, Live and Let Die, 4mins
Bart, From Russia with Love, 3mins
Jack White, Quantum of Solace: Another Way to Die, 4mins
David Arnold, The World is Not Enough, 3mins
Barry, Goldfinger: Title Song, 3mins
Barry, A View to a Kill, 3mins
David Arnold, Die Another Day: Welcome to Cuba, 2mins
Barry, Thunderball, 3mins
Adele and Paul Epworth, Skyfall, 4mins

Interval

Bill Conti, For Your Eyes Only, 3mins
Hamlisch, The Spy Who Loved Me: Nobody Does It Better, 4mins
Barry, Moonraker, 4mins
Billie Eilish, No Time to Die, 5mins
David Arnold, Casino Royale: You Know My Name, 3mins
Barry, OHMSS: All The Time in the World, 4mins
Barry, Diamonds are Forever, 4mins
Sam Smith, Spectre: Writing's on the Wall, 3mins
Kamen, Licence to Kill, 3mins

Stephen Bell, Conductor
Matt Ford, Vocalist
Alison Jear, Vocalist

We are happy for you to take photos and short videos at our concerts during applause breaks. We ask that you are mindful of disturbing artists and other audience members. Please dim the brightness on your phone, and do not use your flash.

We also regularly take photographs for promotional use, so you may see a professional photographer at our concerts. Please ask a member of the front of house team if you have any questions about this.

To ensure that everyone is able to enjoy the performance, please make sure your mobile phone is set to silent.

Principal Funders:



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Did you know?...

JAMES BOND FUN FACTS

1 Roger Moore holds the record for the most official Bond films – he's featured in 7 in total.

2 Paul McCartney's Live and Let Die was the first Bond theme nominated for an Academy Award.

3 Ian Fleming, the author of the Bond series, joined the British Naval Intelligence Division during the Second World War. It is said that his experiences in the Royal Navy inspired the character of James Bond.

4 The iconic gun barrel opening scene actually features the silhouette of stuntman Bob Simmons and not the original actor who played Bond, Sean Connery.

5 Known best for his children's stories, Roald Dahl wrote the screenplay for 'You Only Live Twice' (1967). As an RAF pilot during the Second World War, Dahl used his own wartime experience to adapt the story.

6 The Bond films hold many Guinness World Records including: the most high-explosives detonated in a single film take (Not Time To Die), the largest film stunt explosion (Spectre), and the most cannon rolls in a car (Casino Royale).

7 The Skyfall theme sung by Adele was the first Bond song to win an Oscar.

8 Skyfall, starring Daniel Craig, was the first Bond film to cross \$1 billion at the global box office.

Conductor

STEPHEN BELL



© ANDRES POVEDA

Stephen Bell studied at the Royal College of Music under the renowned conductor Norman Del Mar. February 2022 saw his appointment as Principal Guest Conductor of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Prior to this, he was appointed Artistic Director of the City of Oxford Orchestra in 2009 and Associate Conductor of the Hallé in 2013, a position he still holds. Past highlights include conducting the Queen's Jubilee Concert at Chatsworth House, a gala event for Prince Charles at Windsor Castle, the memorial concert for Alistair Cooke at Westminster Abbey, the award-winning Pitch Perfect for BBC TV's Children in Need at Wembley with the BBC Singers, the televised Music Nation concert from the Clyde Auditorium in Glasgow, and pop legends Texas with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the Barrowland Ballroom, Glasgow, for BBC Music Day 2017. From 2005 to 2010, Stephen was invited to conduct the annual televised BBC Proms in the Park with the BBC Philharmonic, and since 2011, he has appeared every year on the live TV broadcasts of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's Last Night of the Proms celebrations.

MATT FORD

Matt Ford has built an acclaimed career at the forefront of Swing Era and orchestral music. Renowned for his warm tone and effortless phrasing, Matt has performed with many of the World's leading ensembles and conductors. Always in demand, Matt has appeared with the BBC Concert Orchestra & NOW, RTE CO, RPO, Halle Orchestra, RLPO, CBSO and Irish National Symphony Orchestra. Matt has made four BBC Proms appearances, as principle male vocalist with the John Wilson Orchestra in their 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2019 performances. His concert career has seen him perform at the Royal Albert Hall (on more than 25 occasions), Barbican, Royal Festival Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Symphony Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, and extensively throughout Europe. Broadcast and recording credits include Friday Night is Music Night, BBC Big Band Special, Sunday Night is Music Night, and Sky Arts' 100 Years of Big Bands. His studio work includes EMI Classics' That's Entertainment - and his album From Abbey Road, which debuted as No.1 on the iTunes Jazz chart and which gave Matt his first UK Official Top 40 Singles Chart hit.



Vocalist

ALISON JIEAR



Alison trained classically in voice and piano at The Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Australia. She moved to London in 1988 as a member of the girl group The Fabulous Singlettes, where they enjoyed three West End seasons, performed on countless UK variety shows, and had their own television specials on the BBC and ITV. Alison received an Olivier Award Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical for *JERRY SPRINGER THE OPERA* (Royal National Theatre / Cambridge Theatre) and reprised the role at The Sydney Opera House in Australia in 2009. Other West End credits include *Sister Mary Patrick* in *SISTER ACT* (Dominion Theatre), *XANADU*, *SHOES* (Sadler's Wells), *ON THE TOWN* (English National Opera & Theatre du Chatelet, Paris), *SMOKEY JONES CAFÉ*, *THE HOT MIKADO*, *GREASE*, *THREE LITTLE PIGS* and *LES MISERABLES*. A sought after solo concert artist, Alison appears regularly with numerous orchestras throughout the UK. She has produced her one woman shows all over the world. She has released four solo CD's: *Simply, Forgiveness'*, *Embrace, In Your Eyes: Live at Pizza on the Park*, *Inspirational*, and a fifth album with trumpet player, Adam Linsley.

© BECKY LEE

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Friday 20 February 2026



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Emma Lisney
Nathan Bomans*
Jane Wright*#
Richard Thomas*
Victoria Farrell-Reed
Bethan Allmand*
Mark Robinson#
Luke Coomber
Wendy Quirk
Cathy Chambers
Adam Hill
Libby Golding

VIOLIN II

Alexandra Caldon
Charlotte Skinner*
Izzy Howard
Gabriel Dyker*#
Tim Birchall*#
Bryony Morrison*#
Yuriko Matsuda*
Georgia Hannant*#
Tam Mott
Amy Littlewood

VIOLA

Chris Yates*#
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Catherine Bower*#
Isobel Doncaster*
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Sam Kinrade
Daniel Mills
Jonathan Quirk#

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Richard Ward
Simon Baker
Julian Turner

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Alex Henshaw

Recipient of the CBSO Long Service Award

* Supported player

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But it is the people themselves who are at the very heart of our membership. CBSO members can enjoy the chance to share the company of musicians and artists and meet new like-minded friends.

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Simply visit [cbso.co.uk/membership](https://www.cbso.co.uk/membership) to sign up online, or call the development team on **0121 616 6510**.

We look forward to welcoming you to the family!



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If you'd like to share any additional feedback, or have any questions, please email us at marketing@cbsoco.uk.